

Weasenham Church of England Primary Academy

Common End, Weasenham, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2SP

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders, governors and trustees work collaboratively, setting high expectations through a shared strategic vision. They have established a cohesive middle leadership team, that supports school improvement well.
- Professional training is used effectively to develop teachers' and teaching assistants' skills. This has improved the quality of teaching and learning.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start in the school. Interesting opportunities enable children to learn independently, and with other pupils in their mixed-age class.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. They have confidence in leaders and appreciate the work all staff do to help their children learn.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders ensure that pupils are well looked after and that they are kept safe.
- Teaching and learning for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well organised. Additional funding is used effectively to ensure that these pupils make good progress from their various starting points.
- The new behaviour management policy is improving pupils' behaviour and social skills. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school.
- Leaders ensure that a stimulating curriculum provides pupils with exciting and engaging learning opportunities. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Staff develop good working relationships with pupils, which support their good attitudes to learning. Consequently, current pupils make good progress throughout the school.
- Teaching is good across the school. However, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged over time to enable them to reach greater depth and the higher standards in English and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Not enough time has passed for teachers' recent focus on improving pupils' communication and language skills, through enhancing their use of technical vocabulary, to show a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure pupils' good progress and raise standards, by:
 - consistently challenging the most able pupils so that more reach the greater depth and the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2
 - continuing to develop pupils' understanding of key vocabulary across the curriculum to strengthen their communication and language skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, staff, governors and trustees work together effectively. They are ambitious for all pupils in this small, inclusive village school. A robust strategic plan is in place to ensure continuous school improvement. Everyone shares the school's vision of 'children to flourish through the field of life'.
- The executive headteacher has strategically placed leaders and teachers across the two federated schools to spread expertise. She has supported the head of school to become a competent senior leader.
- Staff at all levels form a cohesive team. All who responded to Ofsted's staff questionnaire indicated that they feel well supported at the school. High-quality training and the sharing of good practice, often from the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT), has enhanced leaders and teachers' knowledge. This is improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the progress pupils make across the curriculum.
- Subject leaders ensure that the curriculum builds on pupils' knowledge and skills year by year. They examine the quality of teaching and learning in their relevant subjects and check how well pupils are doing. Subject leaders are formalising assessment in all subjects and building up work samples to support teachers' assessments. Leaders and teachers check the accuracy of their judgements about pupils' work with schools across the federation, the multi-academy trust and the local area to support accurate assessment, while also sharing effective practice.
- Leaders ensure that support for disadvantaged pupils is carefully planned and takes account of pupils' individual barriers to learning. They sensitively consider pupils' social, emotional and academic needs. Well-tailored support, including the new outdoors learning, builds up pupils' confidence and perseverance. This enables most disadvantaged pupils to make good progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator checks the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEND carefully. As a result, these pupils, some of whom have complex needs and are also disadvantaged, receive personalised tasks. These enable them to make good progress from their various starting points and develop greater independence in their learning. The recent change in the school's special educational needs advisory service ensures greater value for money and improved guidance for pupils with SEND. The latest reading and spelling interventions for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND indicate rapid improvement in these skills, during just one term's learning.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively. Pupils benefit from a wide range of sports activities and have many opportunities to take part in competitions with other schools. The funding also supports pupils' understanding of living more healthily and develops the teaching skills of staff to ensure good-quality PE lessons.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and learning about British values are promoted effectively, through an aspirational curriculum enhanced by a

range of clubs, visits and events. During the inspection Year 5 and 6 pupils were on a residential trip in Northumberland, staying in a medieval castle, mixing with pupils from different areas and widening their life experiences. New outdoor learning opportunities, which began in the autumn term, are praised by parents and pupils for building up resilience and team work. Leaders are determined that pupils leave the school as thoughtful, well-rounded individuals.

- Parental support for the school is high. All parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and those who spoke with the inspector, praised the work of the school and indicated that they would recommend the school to other parents. Typical comments included, 'My child loves coming to school and is absolutely flourishing. Can't recommend the school enough' and 'Weasenham is a lovely little school, where the kids respect each other and the staff do a great job encouraging learning.'
- Leaders are working on raising pupils' achievements in English and mathematics by improving pupils' communication and language skills. However, this strategy has not been implemented for long enough to influence pupils' outcomes. Too few pupils are reaching greater depth and the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Governance of the school

- The trust and local governing boards have clearly defined areas of responsibility. They offer effective support and challenge to school leaders to secure school improvement. Trustees and governors recognise the school's strengths and weaknesses. With senior leaders, they ensure that policies, audits and strategic plans address any areas for development swiftly. Representatives from both boards visit the school regularly and ask pertinent questions to hold leaders to account regarding the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' outcomes.
- Governors check that additional funding, including that for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, is used effectively to improve the progress these pupils make. Governors speak positively regarding the impact of the PE and sports funding and ensure it increases the sporting opportunities for all pupils.
- Trustees and governors ensure that their legal duties are fully met, especially for those regarding safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are determined that a strong safeguarding culture exists within the school. They use regular, effective training to ensure that staff understand how to keep pupils safe. Staff recognise and respond appropriately where pupils may be at risk of harm. They know the pupils extremely well, so are quick to refer any concerns. Designated safeguarding leaders ensure that any information they receive is appropriately actioned and recorded. Staff work with outside agencies when needed. The checks for ensuring that adults are suitable to work with pupils are well maintained.
- Designated leaders are well aware that even though this small school is located in rural

Norfolk everyone has to be vigilant regarding county lines (exploitation of children by criminal gangs to sell drugs), extremism and radicalisation.

- Pupils are taught how to keep safe. They understand about road and water safety and how to use the internet securely. Pupils say they feel safe in school and can discuss any concerns with their teachers, who they are confident would help them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school because teachers set high expectations, know their pupils well and ensure that teaching is well matched to pupils' individual needs. Inspection evidence, including the work in pupils' books and on high-quality displays, confirms this.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and explain new ideas clearly. They plan exciting challenges across the curriculum and use effective questioning to extend pupils' learning. However, the most able pupils are not always challenged enough so that they attain greater depth and/or the higher standards.
- Pupils work well together. They are eager to share their ideas and learn from each other. They have formed positive relationships with adults. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils well, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. As a result, most pupils throughout the school make good progress from their September starting points.
- Adults ensure that pupils in the early years and key stage 1 learn the basics of phonics effectively. Pupils learn to break down words to read them and to blend sounds together to spell them accurately. They also learn to read and spell 'tricky' words which cannot be 'sounded out' using their knowledge of phonics.
- As pupils move through the school, their reading skills are developed well. The use of high-quality texts is expanding pupils' vocabulary. Year 3 and 4 pupils read and discussed an extract from 'Beowulf' well. They confidently recognised and discussed alliteration and used their inference and deduction skills to describe how characters felt at a given time. Effective teaching of reading, combined with interesting, new library books, ensure that pupils enjoy reading and make good progress.
- Teachers model writing techniques well. Pupils are encouraged to use appropriate punctuation, vocabulary, spelling and grammar in their many opportunities to write. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4, following on from their work on 'Beowulf', were challenged to create tension in a story starter involving a monster. High-quality starters included, 'In the sweltering depths of the misty marsh' and 'On a dark and gloomy night the sinister monster was summoned to...'.
- Teachers provide interesting purposes for pupils to write across the curriculum. Key stage 2 pupils enhanced their diary writing skills when taking on the role of a character from Norfolk aboard the Titanic. Key stage 1 pupils, as part of the work on 'Fruitastic', produced good-quality, healthy recipes. They were very proud to share their recipes with shoppers at a local supermarket.
- The teaching and learning in mathematics show clear progression through a variety of challenges. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils used cubes and rulers to measure the length of classroom objects accurately, with adult support where required. Later, in the

outside learning space, they were able to enhance their work on measurement by finding out how tall they were. Work on measurement is extended in key stage 2, in a real-life situation, by using imperial measures in reference to nearby Fakenham races. Pupils are able to clearly explain their thinking when solving problems. Books indicate that pupils are making good progress from their September starting points across various mathematical concepts.

- Assessment is used in lessons to identify misconceptions and to plan future work which meets pupils' needs. The school's new feedback and marking policy is enabling adults to pick up errors instantly, which supports pupils' progress well.
- Pupils' activities in other subjects including science, history and geography build on prior learning, with effective links to English and mathematics to support good progress. However, some pupils do not always understand the key, technical vocabulary in these subjects that is required to deepen their thinking.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and are happy to talk to adults about their work. They show good attitudes to learning. The learning environment is calm and orderly because adults set high expectations of pupils' behaviour both in the classroom and around the school.
- Adults know the pupils extremely well. They ensure that pupils are well supported in the school academically, socially and emotionally. Regular discussions take place among staff and additional help is provided to support pupils' well-being when required.
- Pupils develop respectful relationships with staff. The new outdoor learning tasks build up pupils' confidence, perseverance and resilience.
- The school works well with parents to keep them informed about their children's personal development, behaviour and welfare. Parents appreciate that staff are available before and after school, so that any concerns are addressed quickly.
- Pupils understand the different forms bullying can take. They told the inspector that bullying was rare and adults deal with any incidents swiftly and well.
- Pupils are caring towards one another. They happily mix with pupils of different ages at breaktimes, sharing a variety of outdoor play equipment. During the preparation for sports day pupils encouraged each other to take part, so that even the younger pupils joined in eagerly and confidently.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and well-mannered in lessons and around the school. Parents agreed that behaviour in the school is good.
- The school's new behaviour policy has been well received by teachers and pupils. Evidence indicates that pupils' behaviour has improved since its implementation last

term. Pupils spoke eagerly about being 'ready, respectful and safe' and understood how to do this. They stated that being ready refers to listening and setting good examples, being respectful includes taking turns and using kind words, while being safe means walking in school and following instructions.

- Behaviour is improving. Evidence shows that all incidents are recorded in detail, and appropriate actions are followed through in a timely manner.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They apply themselves well to their activities and choose challenges that make them think hard about their learning. Pupils listen attentively to adults. They make willing contributions to discussions.
- Pupils' attendance is improving over time and is broadly in line with the national average. This is supported by the reduction in the number of pupils who are persistent non-attenders. Staff work closely with parents to improve their children's attendance. Pupils come to school eagerly and they explained that you cannot learn if not in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- This is a very small school, so making comparisons with published information must be carried out with caution. Pupils' outcomes vary each year and are dependent on the characteristics and size of the cohort, as well as the movement of pupils to and from the school.
- Year 6 pupils have not always made enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics from the end of Year 2. However, a range of evidence seen on inspection, together with the school's assessment information, indicates that progress is now much better. Most current pupils across the school are making good progress from their September starting points in reading, writing and mathematics and across the curriculum.
- The proportion of Year 2 pupils attaining the expected standard varies widely over time. In 2018, all pupils at the end of Year 2 attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are ensuring that standards remain high in Year 3.
- Pupils attain well in phonics due to good teaching and learning. They make good progress from their arrival at school to the end of Year 1, with the majority of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND in each year group. Currently, the pupils as a whole school group are making good progress from their September starting points across the curriculum because support is tailored to meet individual pupils' needs and reduce their barriers to learning.
- The most able pupils are not consistently stretched to attain highly.

Early years provision

Good

- Children's capabilities and needs are accurately identified by the early years leader when they join the school. She ensures that the curriculum is tailored each year to meet the needs of the children at that time.
- The children enter the Reception Year with varying skills, some of which are below those typical for their age, including their communication, language and literacy skills. Good teaching and learning ensure that children make good progress from their various starting points. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years leader is knowledgeable about how children learn and uses her experience well to ensure strong teaching and learning in the mixed early years and key stage 1 class. The learning environment is well organised and resourced. The activities are based on an appropriate balance of whole-class tasks and those which meet the individual needs of children.
- Many activities are linked to themes. This promotes children's curiosity and inspires their learning. For example, children enjoyed sharing a wanted poster for a wolf after previously thinking of adjectives to describe the wolf, as part of their work around 'Little Red Riding Hood'.
- Phonics is taught well in the early years. Adults provide children with many physical, visual and verbal tasks to support their learning. Children use their phonic skills to support their reading and spelling.
- Assessment systems are used effectively to check the progress and development of children. This information informs teaching to ensure that children make good progress across all areas of learning. Evidence of this is recorded on electronic devices.
- Behaviour in the early years is good. Children listen and engage with learning purposefully. They play well together. Clear routines and high expectations help children to settle quickly. The early years environment promotes children's personal, social and emotional development well. Children are sociable and confident.
- The early years leader and other adults work collaboratively and know individual children very well. They continuously receive high-quality training to improve their skills. They use discussion with skilful questioning to help children develop their ideas and speaking and listening skills.
- The outside area has been developed effectively to enhance children's learning further. For example, children are given many opportunities to develop their mathematics skills through playing in the mud kitchen. The younger children, while making cakes, correctly counted the number of bowls, placed them in order from smallest to largest and stated their colours.
- Parents are pleased with the teaching and learning in the early years and the good progress their children make. Early years staff have developed good working relationships with parents.
- A smooth transition into school is supported by new Reception pupils joining the class regularly during the summer term. Welcoming activities include lunch and a teddy bears' picnic.
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements are in place and meet the legal requirements for young children. Children's needs are well met in a safe and nurturing environment.

School details

Unique reference number	142855
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10088698

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Julia Little
Executive Headteacher	Belinda Allen
Telephone number	01328 838365
Website	www.weasenhamschool.org.uk
Email address	head@weasenhamschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school federated with Rudham Primary School in September 2011. The two schools share an executive headteacher with individual heads of schools.
- Weasenhams Church of England Primary Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 June 2016. When its predecessor school, Weasenhams Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The school receives support and challenge from the trust's executive officer, its regional executive principal and its local governing body. Responsibility for the school's performance lies with the DNEAT trust board.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Norwich. The last section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character was 18 June 2014.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in the two mixed-age classes. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the executive headteacher and the head of school.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the head of school, subject leaders, the early years leader, the special needs coordinator and the trust's regional executive principal. A joint meeting with governors and representatives from DNEAT, including the chief executive officer, was also held.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were on a residential trip in Northumberland throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including: the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses; information on pupils' attainment and progress; records of behaviour and safety; minutes of governing body meetings; and safeguarding documents.
- A discussion was held with a group of pupils, and informal conversations with pupils took place during lessons and at breaktimes. The inspector listened to pupils read and scrutinised work in pupils' books.
- The inspector considered 21 responses to Parent View, as well as eight free-text comments. Views of parents were informally sought at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspector also took account of six staff and 23 pupils' responses to their online surveys.

Inspection team

Julie Harrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019